

IN THE CLAIMS:

1 1. (original) A carrier for holding a workpiece, said workpiece having a central
2 pattern area and an outer area, comprising:
3 a chuck plate for holding said workpiece and having at least one clamping area on
4 a top surface thereof;
5 a carrier body for supporting said chuck plate;
6 a set of gripping members rigidly attached to said carrier body for gripping said
7 chuck plate; and
8 a set of alignment members attached to said chuck plate for positioning said
9 workpiece in a reference position relative to said chuck plate.

1 2. (original) A carrier according to claim 1, in which said chuck plate has a
2 central aperture penetrating to an aperture depth less than a chuck plate
3 thickness, whereby said central aperture has a bottom surface; and
4 said bottom surface has an electron absorber disposed thereon.

1 3. (original) A carrier according to claim 1, in which said at least one clamping
2 area comprises at least one electrostatic chuck.

1 4. (original) A carrier according to claim 2, in which said at least one clamping
2 area comprises at least one electrostatic chuck.

1 5. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 3, in which ~~said~~ a central
2 aperture of said chuck plate is substantially rectangular and said at least one
3 clamping area comprises four electrostatic chucks on four sides of said top surface
4 of said chuck plate.

1 6. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 4, in which ~~said~~ a central
2 aperture of said chuck plate is substantially rectangular and said at least one
3 clamping area comprises four electrostatic chucks on four sides of said top surface
4 of said chuck plate.

1 7. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 5, further comprising one
2 electrostatic chuck on ~~the~~ a bottom surface of said carrier body.

1 8. (original) A carrier according to claim 6, further comprising one electrostatic
2 chuck on the bottom surface of said carrier body.

1 9. (original) A carrier according to claim 1, in which said gripping members for
2 gripping said chuck plate are flexible in a vertical direction perpendicular to said
3 workpiece; stiff in an azimuthal direction about a central point of said chuck plate

4 and flexible in a radial direction with respect to said central point of said chuck
5 plate.

1 10. (original) A carrier according to claim 2, in which said gripping members for
2 gripping said chuck plate are flexible in a vertical direction perpendicular to said
3 workpiece; stiff in an azimuthal direction about a central point of said chuck plate
4 and flexible in a radial direction with respect to said central point of said chuck
5 plate.

1 11. (currently amended) A carrier for holding a mask, said mask having a
2 central pattern area and an outer area, comprising:
3 a chuck plate for holding said mask and having at least one clamping area on a
4 top surface thereof;
5 a carrier body for supporting said chuck plate;
6 a set of gripping members rigidly attached to said carrier ~~base~~ body for gripping
7 said chuck plate; and
8 a set of alignment members attached to said chuck plate for positioning said mask
9 in a reference position relative to said chuck plate.

1 12. (original) A carrier according to claim 11, in which said chuck plate has a
2 central aperture penetrating to an aperture depth less than a chuck plate
3 thickness, whereby said central aperture has a bottom surface; and
4 said bottom surface has an electron absorber disposed thereon.

1 13. (original) A carrier according to claim 11, in which said at least one
2 clamping area comprises at least one electrostatic chuck.

1 14. (original) A carrier according to claim 12, in which said at least one
2 clamping area comprises at least one electrostatic chuck.

1 15. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 13, in which ~~said~~ a central
2 aperture of said wafer chuck plate is substantially rectangular and said at least one
3 clamping area comprises four electrostatic chucks on four sides of said top surface
4 of said wafer chuck plate.

1 16. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 14, in which ~~said~~ a central
2 aperture of said chuck plate is substantially rectangular and said at least one
3 clamping area comprises four electrostatic chucks on four sides of said top surface
4 of said chuck plate.

1 17. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 15, further comprising one
2 electrostatic chuck on ~~the~~ a bottom surface of said carrier body.

1 18. (currently amended) A carrier according to claim 16, further comprising
2 one electrostatic chuck on ~~the~~ a bottom surface of said carrier body.

1 19. (original) A carrier according to claim 11, in which said gripping members for
2 gripping said chuck plate are flexible in a vertical direction perpendicular to said
3 mask; stiff in an azimuthal direction about a central point of said chuck plate and
4 flexible in a radial direction with respect to said central point of said chuck plate.

1 20. (original) A carrier according to claim 12, in which said gripping members
2 for gripping said chuck plate are flexible in a vertical direction perpendicular to said
3 mask; stiff in an azimuthal direction about a central point of said chuck plate and
4 flexible in a radial direction with respect to said central point of said chuck plate.